

ROUTING AND RECORD SHEET

SUBJECT: (Optional)

Monthly Report -- Swaziland Bureau

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FROM:		EXTENSION		NO.
Chief, Operations Group		<input type="checkbox"/>		DATE
				April 1987
TO: (Officer designation, room number, and building)	DATE		OFFICER'S INITIALS	COMMENTS (Number each comment to show from whom to whom. Draw a line across column after each comment.)
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EDITIONS



EMBASSY OF THE
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

P.O. Box 199
Mbabane, Swaziland

4 May 1987
MMB - 7006

MEMORANDUM FOR: Director, Foreign Broadcast Information Service

THROUGH : Chief, Operations Group

SUBJECT : Monthly Report -- Swaziland Bureau -- March 1987

I. GENERAL

A. On 24 April the Bureau Chief and Deputy Chief attended a celebration at the Royal stadium of King Mswati III's 20th birthday. Along with 3,000 other leading dignitaries, members of the royal family and loyal citizens, the Bureau delegation watched the Royal Swazi Regiments parade and the Swazi police motorcycle corps put on a display of trick motorcycle riding, a special favorite of the king.

B. Bureau employees were very happy to see a pay raise appear in their checks this month. This 10.6 percent pay raise was approved by PMCD retroactive to 31 August 1986. Astonishingly, so far no errors by RAMC Paris have been detected in the calculations for this pay raise.

C. Bureau staffers this month have been busy running the new FERS comparison software left by the Pretoria Administrative Officer who visited the Bureau in early April. We have all found the software most enlightening, and two of the staff have already begun contributions to the Thrift Savings Plan during the first open season.

II. OPERATIONS

A. Monitorial/Editorial

1. Events in South Africa kept the Bureau busy during the month of April. Most of the activity centered around the lead up to the White parliamentary elections scheduled for 6 May. On 9 April Pik Botha warned the country of an ANC planned terrorist offensive to disrupt the elections, specifically pointing to armed ANC infiltration from Zambia. This was followed by a number of mines exploding in white areas of Natal. Finally on 25 April, a South African patrol was discovered on a reconnaissance mission in the Zambian town of Livingstone, reputedly investigating ANC infiltration routes and bases. In the resulting clash, five people were killed, whom the South Africans claimed were ANC supporters, but the Zambians claimed were ordinary citizens.

2. Union activity also increased in South African, with the postal workers and railroad workers continuing their strikes. In the worst incident during the railroad workers strike, the South African police surrounded the COSATU union hall, where a mass meeting was in progress. As union members

started to flee the hall, the police opened fire, killing 3 strikers on 22 April. The state-run railroad broke the strike by firing some 18,000 striking workers.

3. Bureau wordage for the month has increased largely due to increased processing from the nightly South African Network news program on television. This 1-hour program, normally not worth processing, has been the main forum for debate on the positions of the various parties contending for the elections. Now 4 or 5 nights per week, the bureau has been processing one or two interviews or panel discussions by high level party spokesmen on election issues.

4. Interest in relations between the United States and Angola surfaced this month when an Angolan delegation, on a visit to Brazzaville in the Congo, met with a U.S. delegation led by Chester Crocker. This coincided to some extent with a move to reopen the Benguela railroad, as an alternative to South African routes for moving goods from central Africa to the coast. The Benguela railroad has long been closed by the MPLA-UNITA fighting.

5. Starvation in Mozambique also became a topic of major international concern, as large relief efforts have begun to help solve a problem which many observers say has reached the level of the Ethiopian situation of a few years ago.

B. Technical

1. The new Victor VPC II computer arrived in mid-April as a backup to the IBM hard disk now in use in the Teleop room. The new Victor is being tested and hooked up to an ASR before being installed in the Teleop room as a "hot" spare.

2. Both Bureau UPS units were modified by a contractor in April so that these units would recognize the slightly different power from the Bureau generator and click off. Previously, whenever the city power went off, the UPS units would continue to operate until exhausted, not recognizing the generator power as legitimate.

3. Fluctuating city power has caused the Bureau to use its generator frequently during April. The unsteady power has caused the Bureau lights to flicker rapidly on and off, giving us a nightly light show until the editors cut off city power entirely and rely on the generator exclusively. The problem, we think, can be traced to a new city transformer installed a block away two months ago, but repeated calls and pleas to various levels of the Swazi Electricity Board have been fruitless so far.

4. A new microwave oven for office use was bought and installed in April. This should allow our hardworking staff to get a quick hot meal during busy shifts, a special advantage during this heavy election coverage period.

III. ADMINISTRATION

A. Personnel

Periodic Step Increases were awarded in April to Bureau monitor
[redacted] and teletypist [redacted]

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IV. VISITS

Embassy GSO supply personnel had a tour of the Bureau on 28 April to get an idea of the size of the operation, and our small supply needs, which they purchase locally for us.

V. COMMUNITY ACTIVITIES

The Bureau Chief and Deputy Chief, and their spouses, have been working with the American parents group to develop a program of supplementary education for their primary and secondary school children. The group has interviewed three potential teachers for an afternoon program of additional instruction in such areas as social studies, American studies, science, computer studies, and remedial reading and math. We have also procured copies of the Stanford Achievement test, which the GSO (a former New York City teacher) has volunteered to administer, to test the children's abilities compared to their American peers.

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[redacted]
Chief, Swaziland Bureau